



Special
Days

LESSON PLANS

for

Internationally recognized

SPECIAL DAYS

[with an animal component]



The **United Nations** has designated certain days in the calendar as **International Days** in order to shine a spotlight on **important aspects of human life.**



8 MAY

The content of this Lesson Plan supports
World Donkey Day



Donkeys have laboured on behalf of humans ever since they were first domesticated about 5000 years ago.

Over the centuries they have...

- helped us *plough the land* in preparation for planting

- helped us *thresh wheat* for bread

- helped us *carry heavy loads*

- from place to place, even across great distances

- been *essential* to our

- transport* right up to this very day *in rural areas*



Donkeys are STOIC

They are also known for their stamina, strength, intelligence, patience and affectionate natures.

They can become stubborn and uncooperative if bullied.



Look up

NEW WORDS

you may not be sure of...



STOIC

What are the
characteristics
of a stoic?

The South African town of Upington in the Northern Cape is home to a life-sized monument of a donkey ***to symbolise the contribution made by donkeys*** in helping early farmers to pump water from the Orange River.





Donkey nannies are donkeys that help look after newborn lambs



They're mostly found in Italy where they help shepherds to **transport new-born lambs from high pastures down to the plains**, when the lambs are too young to make the journey on their own.

The donkeys have to wear special coats with cosy pockets into which the lambs can fit.

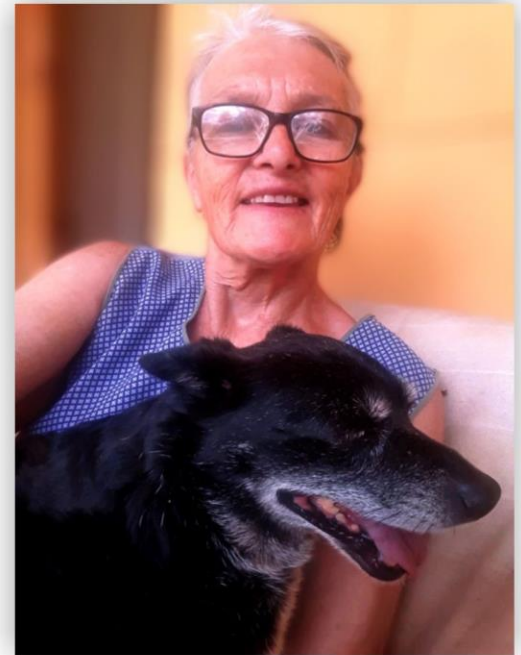


During rest stops, the lambs are taken out of the pockets so that they can suckle from their moms before being returned to the pockets to continue the journey down the mountain.

*Teacher's
Note*



***Invite the learners
to read this story
written by
Dr Peta Jones,
a world expert
on donkeys and
their welfare.***



Illustrations by
Pandora Alberts



English

VERSION

Also available in Afrikaans, isiXhosa, isiZulu, SeSotho and SeTswana.



The Precious Gift

by Peta Jones



The Little Donkey

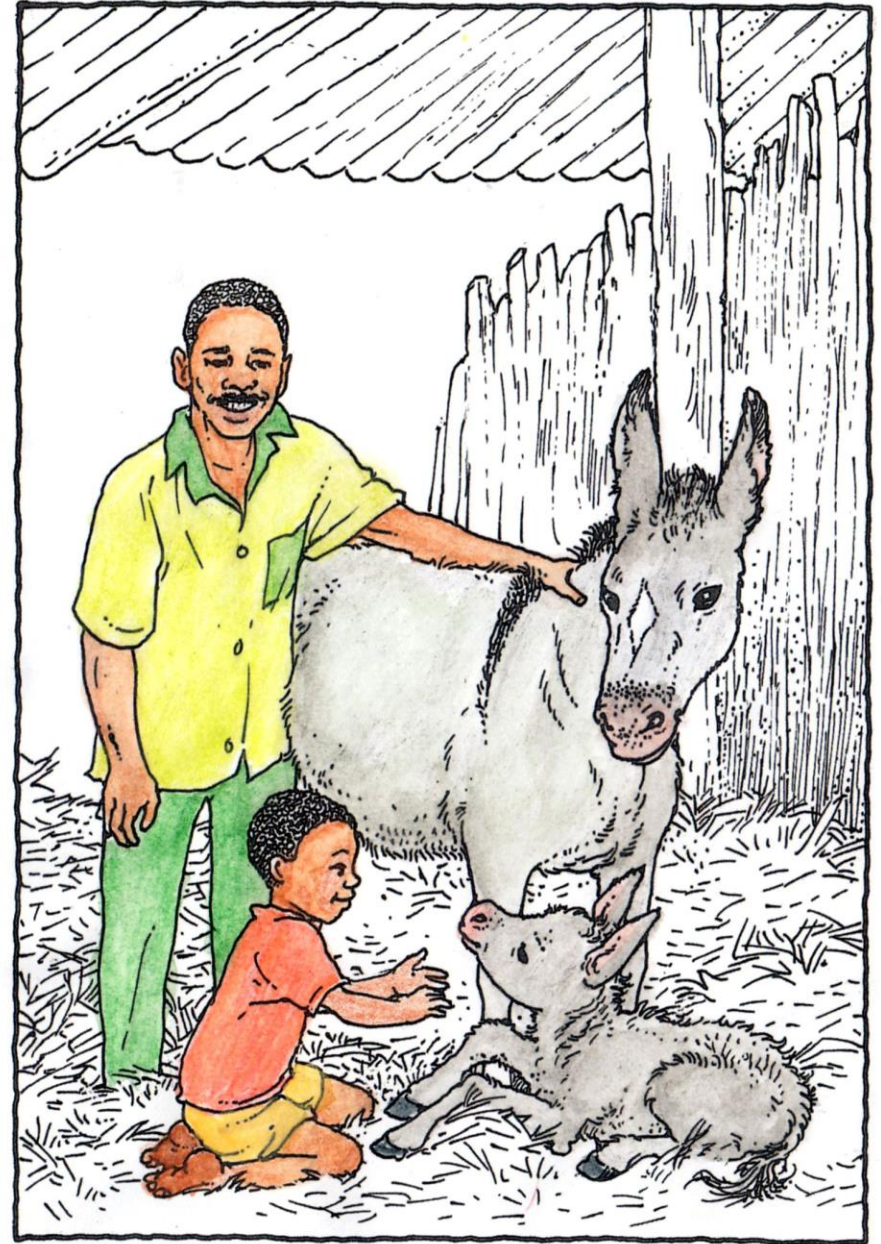
Thabo was 3 years old when his father's donkey had a baby foal. Thabo's father said he could give the foal a name and look after it himself. He told Thabo that in the olden days, kings and noblemen rode donkeys. "Humans are very lucky that donkeys are able to work for us. They need to be well looked after, in return for all their work," he said.

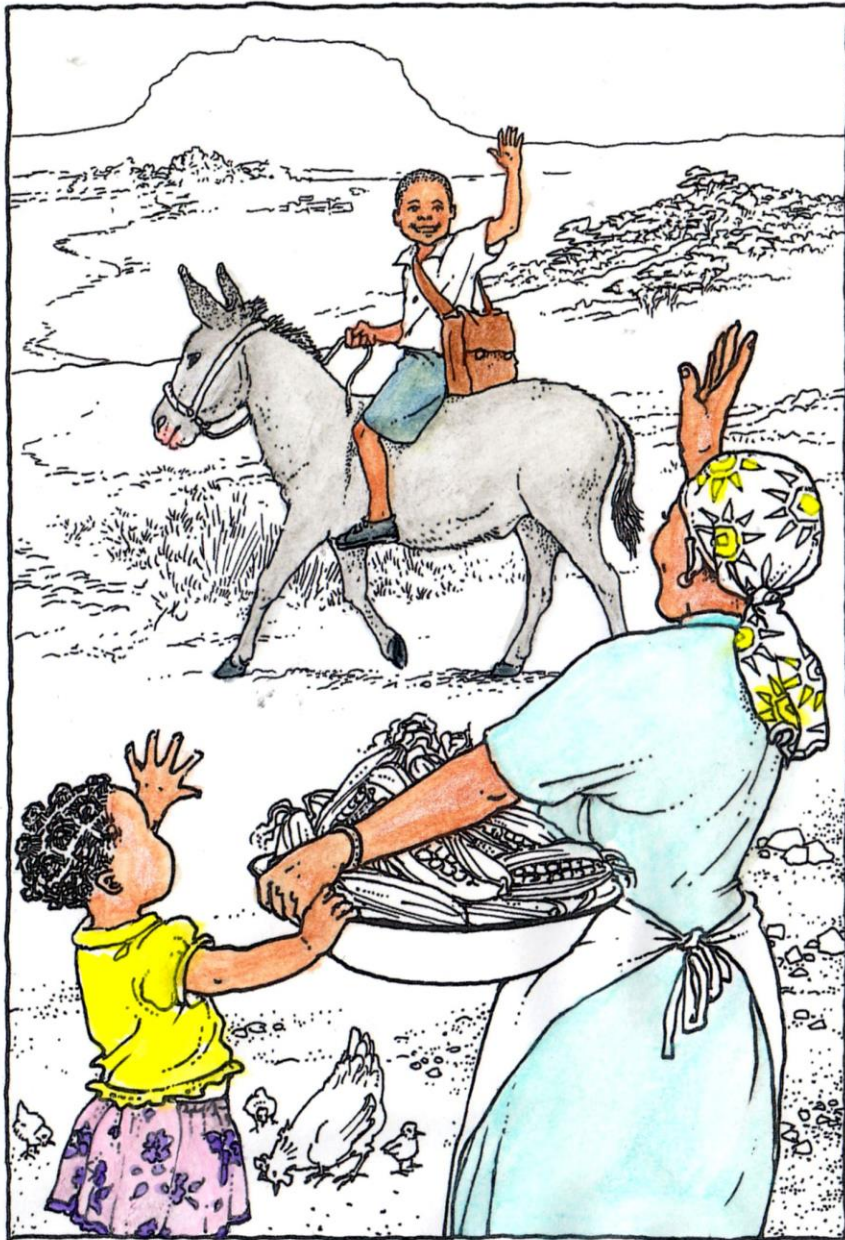
Thabo called the little donkey Chipo, meaning 'gift'. Thabo's father showed him how to get Chipo used to having his feet and eyes touched. He explained that this was necessary because sometimes donkeys' hoofs need to be cleaned when they fill up with mud, or get thorns stuck inside them. Their eyes need to be washed when there is too much dust and too many flies that cause donkeys to weep.

Thabo loved the silky coat Chipo had when he was little, and the velvet skin around Chipo's mouth. Holding his hand flat, Thabo would give Chipo little bits of food. Chipo would take it from Thabo's hand with his soft, gentle lips. Soon, when he saw Thabo coming, Chipo would bray loudly in greeting.

Chipo grew up faster than Thabo, but Thabo's father warned him that Chipo's bones were not yet strong. If he was put to work too young, carrying heavy loads, his bones would become twisted, and this would give him pain for the rest of his life. If Chipo was well cared for, his life would be almost as long as Thabo's, because donkeys can live a very long time.

When Chipo was 4 years old and grown up, he started helping his mother pull Thabo's father's cart. Chipo also helped plough Thabo's mother's field.





But now Thabo was 7 years old and needed Chipo to take him to school. Thabo had heavy books to carry, but Chipo could carry them and carry Thabo at the same time.

Schooldays

While Thabo learned in school, Chipo learned to find good food on the hill. Dry grass and bush is good food for a donkey. Thabo taught Chipo to come back to school at the same time every day when school closed, to carry him and his books back home.

Some of the children at school laughed at Chipo.

Sally said: “How funny to use a slow old animal. My father brings me in a fast, smart car. I can listen to the radio in the car!”

Other children said: “We come in a taxi, and we listen to music cassettes!”

Phineas said: “My bicycle is shiny and new and stays where I put it. It does not need to eat grass.”

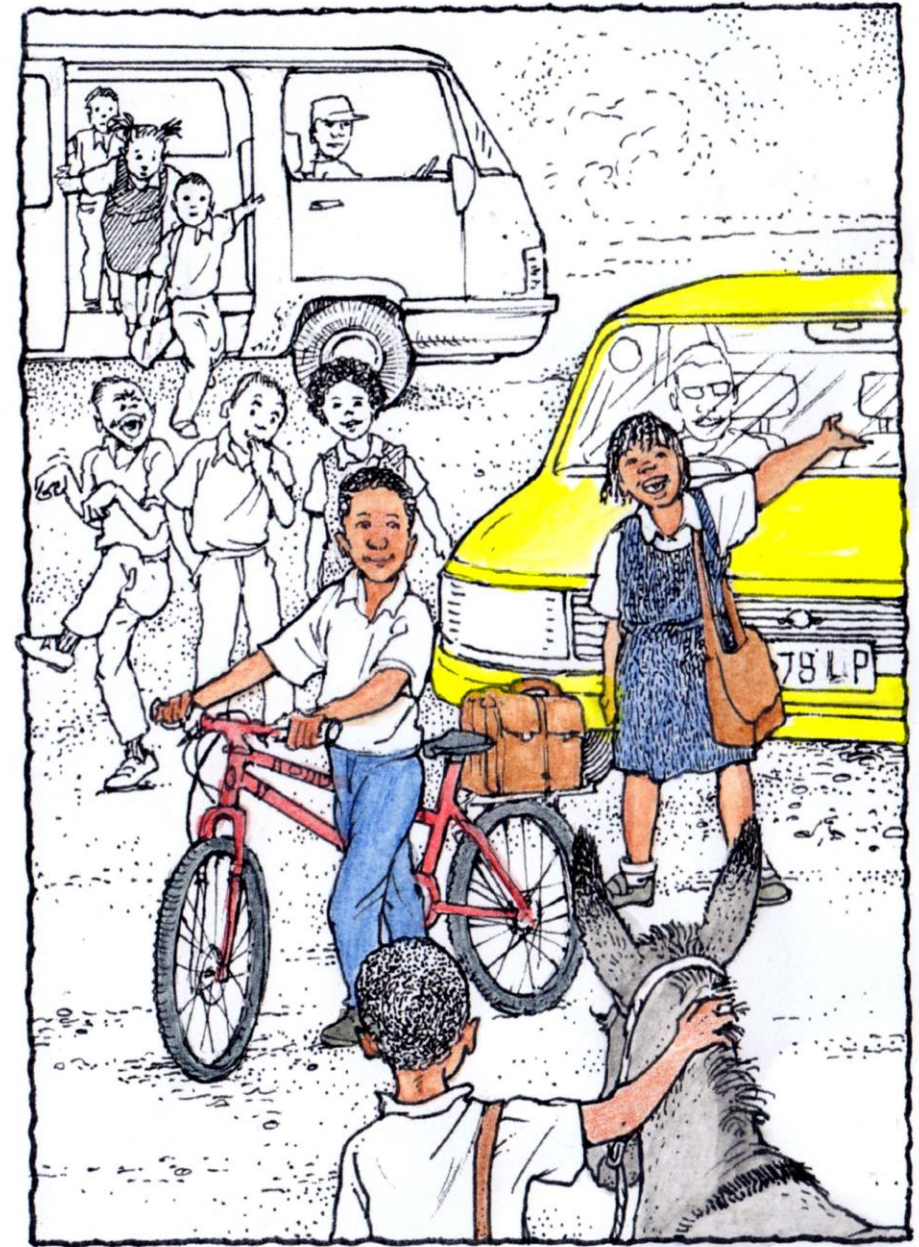
But Thabo loved Chipo and Chipo loved Thabo and followed him everywhere. Thabo did not ask his father for a bicycle.

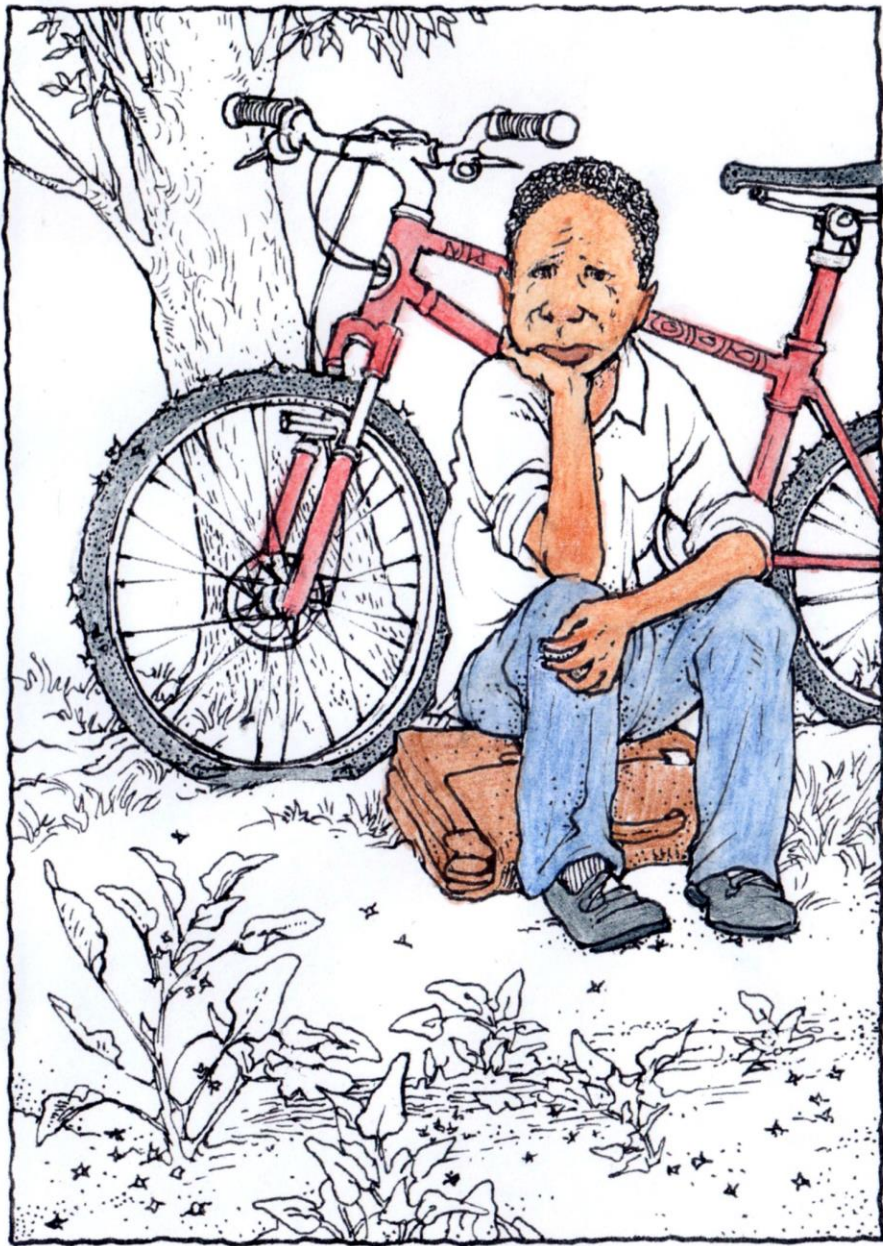
Then one day, riding to school, Thabo passed Sally walking along the road, carrying her heavy books.

“Where is your father's car?” asked Thabo.

“There is no petrol for the car” said Sally sadly. She climbed onto Chipo and rode with Thabo to school.

“Chipo carried me as well as my books!” she told the other children. After that she rode with Thabo almost every day.





On another day, when Thabo and Sally were leaving school, they found Phineas crying.

“My tyre is flat! If I try to ride my bike, the wheel will break!” Phineas left his bicycle at school, and went home on Chipo, riding with Thabo and Sally.

Thabo's father was angry because he thought the load was too much for Chipo. “Three children and all the books are enough for one donkey! If more children ride, or when you grow bigger, the load will be too much. Other children must get their own donkeys,” said father.

Phineas spent hours fixing his bicycle. He needed to do this again and again, because the rough roads often gave him a flat tyre and he was often late for school.

One day many children did not arrive in time for school. These were the children that came by taxi. The Headmaster was very worried. He made a telephone call, and told the teachers: "The taxi crashed but, fortunately, nobody was hurt!"

The Taxi

After that, Thabo's father was the taxi driver for the school children, and the donkey cart was the taxi. Sally and Phineas loved this new 'taxi'. All the children at school love donkeys now. Sometimes the children come to help Thabo and his father feed the fields with donkey manure. This way Thabo's father saves money and grows good crops. They all agree that, in Chipo, Thabo has a very precious gift.

Chipo is never allowed on the main roads, and when he is on any road, Thabo is with him.





At night Chipo has a comfortable place to sleep, where he is safe. Some of the children have asked their own fathers if they can have donkeys, too.

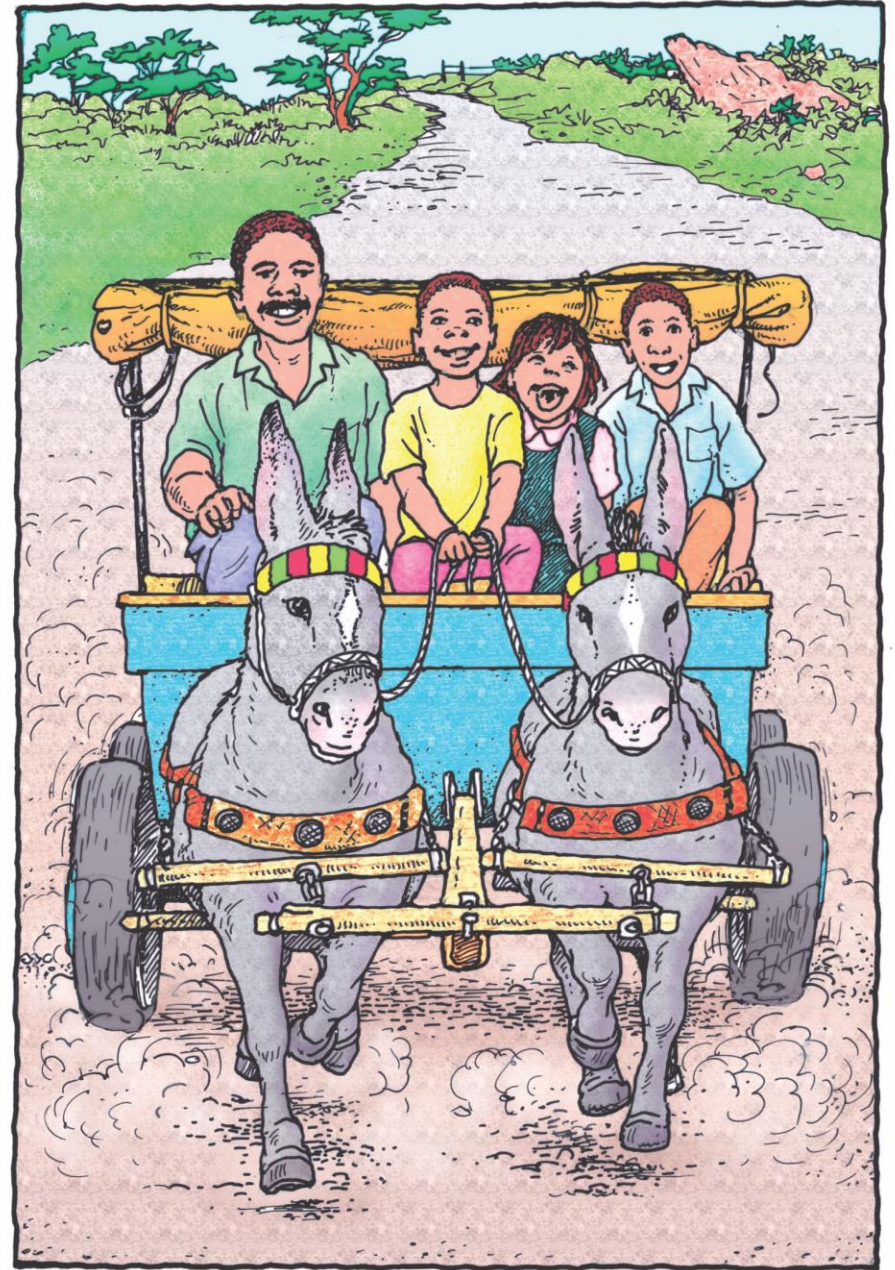
Thabo's father has changed his two-wheel cart for a four-wheel wagon, and can carry even more children to school. If a cart has only two wheels, balancing the load can be a problem, especially for the donkeys. With four wheels this problem is taken away.

For her part, Thabo's mother has been learning to make harnesses by weaving together strips of used super-market plastic bags. This makes strong straps for harnesses and does not hurt the donkeys. At the same time, plastic bags have nice bright colours and can easily be washed so that the harnesses stay bright and clean. This is much better than leaving plastic bags on the ground where they can be eaten by animals.

Animals eat them because they smell of food but plastic makes big knots inside their stomachs and can even cause them to die.

Now both the donkeys pulling the wagon wear reflector tape on straps across their foreheads. The wagon has reflectors behind, in case darkness comes before Thabo's father can reach home. Motor cars coming along the road can see a cart if it can reflect their head lights. The wagon also has as a cover to protect the children from rain.

Thabo's father bought a cassette player to play in the wagon, but mostly the children sing.



*Note to
Teacher*

*Discuss with the learners
how Thabo and his family
made sure their
donkeys enjoyed the
Five Freedoms for Animals.*

*These principles
are endorsed by the
World Organization for
Animal Health.*

5 FREEDOMS for ANIMALS



5 FREEDOMS FOR ANIMALS

Endorsed by The World Organization for Animal Health

Freedom from hunger and thirst

Freedom from discomfort

Freedom from pain, injury & disease

Freedom to express normal behaviour

Freedom from fear and distress



How well do you remember the story?

1 Write **TRUE** or **FALSE**

The name **Chipo** means gift

The skin surrounding Chipo's mouth was soft

When Chipo was 3 years old, he had to pull the cart

Thabo started school when he was 7 years old

Thabo's Father was cross that all 3 children had ridden the donkey at the same time
.....

2 Write down the missing words

The wagon had at the back for when it got dark.

Plastic bag harnesses can easily be

Chipo was never allowed on the roads.

In the olden days and noblemen rode donkeys.

Harnesses made from do not hurt the donkeys.

3 Who...

owned a bicycle?

phoned to find out what had happened to the taxi?

warned the children about Chipo's bones?

drove a fast car?

named the foal?

4 What...

did Thabo's father buy for the wagon?

food did Chipo eat?

could make a donkey's eyes weep?

did Thabo's father use to fertilise the field?

part of the wagon protects the children from the rain?



Write an ACROSTIC poem...

If you look at the following poem you will see that the letters on the left in dark print form the word **DOG**

Dear little puppy

Outside playing with a red ball

Give it lots of love and attention

See if you can create a similar **acrostic poem** using the word **DONKEY**

D

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WORKER'S DAY

**1
MAY**



Just like ***the work of humans is celebrated*** on International Workers' Day on 1st May every year, ***donkeys too are deserving of respect and dignity*** and the right not to be exploited.

Now lawyers are putting their heads together to
discuss how best to...

recognize

*the toil
and labour*

*of
donkeys*

*and
other*

animals



Donkey, donkey, old and grey,
open your mouth and gently bray.
Lift your ears and blow your horn,
to wake the world this sleepy morn.

— Anonymous —

